

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. *(Original)* A method of moderating traffic load on network servers in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from at least one mail server, the method comprising:

 permitting a mail request for a mail client to pass through a proxy server to the mail server; and

 attenuating subsequent mail requests for the mail client at the proxy server until a predetermined condition has been satisfied.

2. *(Original)* The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined condition is a predetermined period of time.

3. *(Original)* The method of claim 2, wherein the predetermined period of time is dynamically determined based on the amount of traffic load on the network.

4. *(Original)* The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined condition is a combination of a predetermined time period and receipt of a notification from the mail server that mail has been received for the mail client at the mail server, whichever occurs first.

5. *(Original)* The method of claim 4, wherein the predetermined period of time is dynamically determined based on the amount of traffic load on the network.

6. *(Currently Amended)* ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method of moderating traffic load on network servers in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from at least one mail server, the method comprising:

permitting a mail request for a mail client to pass through a proxy server to the mail server; and

attenuating subsequent mail requests for the mail client at the proxy server until a predetermined condition has been satisfied, wherein attenuating subsequent mail requests is suspended in the event it is determined that a user is manually initiating rapidly repeated mail requests.

7. *(Original)* The method of claim 1, wherein attenuating includes blocking the subsequent mail requests from transmission across the network to the mail server.

8. *(Original)* The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined condition is independent of time.

9. *(Withdrawn)* A method of managing bandwidth usage in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from at least one mail server, the method comprising:

selecting a time when network bandwidth load is low; and

pushing unretrieved mail messages to a proxy server at the selected time, wherein the pushed mail messages are cached at the proxy server.

10. *(Withdrawn)* The method of managing bandwidth usage of claim 9, wherein selecting

a time is based on when bandwidth load at a predetermined point in the network falls below a predetermined threshold.

11. *(Withdrawn)* The method of managing bandwidth usage of claim 9, wherein selecting a time is based on a predetermined time of day.

12. *(Original)* A proxy server for use in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from at least one mail server, the proxy server comprising:

a processor, and

a memory including software instructions adapted to enable the proxy server to perform the steps of:

permitting a mail request for a mail client to pass through the proxy server to the

mail server; and

attenuating subsequent mail requests for the mail client at the proxy server until a predetermined condition has been satisfied.

13. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 12, wherein the predetermined condition is a predetermined period of time.

14. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 13, wherein the predetermined period of time is dynamically determined based on the amount of traffic load on the network.

15. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 12, wherein the predetermined condition is a combination of a predetermined time period and receipt of a notification from the mail server

that mail has been received for the mail client at the mail server, whichever occurs first.

16. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 15, wherein the predetermined period of time is dynamically determined based on the amount of traffic load on the network.

17. *(Currently Amended)* ~~The proxy server of claim 12,~~ A proxy server for use in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from at least one mail server, the proxy server comprising:

a processor, and

a memory including software instructions adapted to enable the proxy server to perform the steps of:

permitting a mail request for a mail client to pass through the proxy server to the mail server; and

attenuating subsequent mail requests for the mail client at the proxy server until a

predetermined condition has been satisfied, wherein attenuating subsequent mail requests is suspended in the event it is determined that a user is manually initiating rapidly repeated mail requests.

18. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 12, wherein attenuating includes blocking the subsequent mail requests from transmission across the network to the mail server.

19. *(Original)* The proxy server of claim 12, wherein the predetermined condition is independent of time.

20. *(Withdrawn)* A mail server for use in a network where electronic mail is retained for retrieval from the mail server, the mail server comprising:

a processor, and

a memory including software instructions adapted to enable the proxy server to perform the steps of:

selecting a time when network bandwidth load is low; and

pushing unretrieved mail messages to a proxy server at the selected time, wherein the pushed mail messages are cached at the proxy server.

21. *(Withdrawn)* The mail server of claim 20, wherein selecting a time is based on when bandwidth load at a predetermined point in the network falls below a predetermined threshold.

22. *(Withdrawn)* The mail server of claim 20, wherein selecting a time is based on at a predetermined time of day.

23. *(Withdrawn)* A network comprising:

at least one mail server where electronic mail is retained for retrieval by mail clients;

a plurality of proxy servers distributed about the network;

wherein the mail server caches unretrieved mail messages at the proxy servers.

24. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 23, wherein unretrieved mail messages are cached at a selected time.

25. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 24, wherein the selected time is determined to be

when bandwidth load at a predetermined point in the network falls below a predetermined threshold.

26. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 24, wherein the selected time is a predetermined time of day.

27. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 23, wherein the mail server synchronizes with the plurality of proxy servers periodically to ensure that when changes are made to a message on the mail server or on the proxy server that the changes are reconciled.

28. *(Original)* A network comprising:

at least one mail server where electronic mail is retained for retrieval by mail clients;

a plurality of proxy servers distributed about the network;

wherein each of the proxy servers comprises:

a processor, and

a memory including software instructions adapted to enable the proxy server to perform the steps of:

permitting a mail request for a mail client to pass through the proxy server to the mail server; and

attenuating subsequent mail requests for the mail client at the proxy server until a predetermined condition has been satisfied.

29. *(Withdrawn)* A network comprising:

a mail server where electronic mail is retained for retrieval by mail clients;

a plurality of proxy servers distributed about the network;

wherein the mail server comprises:

a processor, and

a memory including software instructions adapted to enable the mail server to

perform the steps of:

selecting a time when network bandwidth load is low; and

pushing unretrieved mail messages to a proxy server at the selected time, wherein

the pushed mail messages are cached at the proxy server.

30. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 29, wherein selecting a time is based on when bandwidth load at a predetermined point in the network falls below a predetermined threshold.

31. *(Withdrawn)* The network of claim 29, wherein selecting a time is based on at a predetermined time of day.